

Friends Bulletin

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Since 1929

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The Universe's Language

The trees speak
But their language is hidden
Deep inside their bark.
They must trust us
Before they reveal it.

The wind speaks,
But in so many different languages
That it is hard to pick one out.

The stars speak
But their fiery flares
Make us afraid to know
What they say.

All things in the Universe
Have a language.
It is not they who must learn to speak,
It is we who must learn to listen.

Aliyah Shanti, Olympia Meeting



Friends Bulletin

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(Opinions expressed are those of the authors, not necessarily of the Yearly Meetings.)

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From the Editor

Sharing Our Light with the World

"The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness can't extinguish (or comprehend) it." (John 1: 5)

It's gratifying to know that our Quaker light is shining—in the desert, in the United Nations, in high schools, in foreign countries like Guatemala, and in the hearts of our children.

To those who are living in the artificial light of our consumerist culture, this Quaker light must seem pretty strange. Not just to believe, but to KNOW, that the Light we need is within each of us, is astonishing, yet strangely comforting "news." It is even more comforting to know that nothing—not even the military industrial complex or the corporate powers-that-be—can extinguish the Light which God has given each one of us.

The other good news is that there are many, many ways of sharing the Light—from witnessing at the nuclear test site to writing silly jingles like the one about Strawberry Creek (see p. 152).

Of course, the most effective way to share the Light is still down-home and "low-tech"—one-on-one, face-to-face, heart-to-heart. It's by our acts of kindness and love that we show we are truly Friends, and that the Light we worship is genuine. Perhaps that's what I found most appealing and valuable in Alicia Carter's "Friendly Encounter with High School Students."

This summer I will be traveling about—to Seattle and Olympia, to an Indian reservation in Arizona, to a *colonia* in Mexico, and to each of the three Western Yearly Meetings, where I look forward to meeting with many of you. On all of these trips I will be carrying *your* concerns—both figuratively and literally. My suitcase will be full of *Friends Bulletins*, but my heart will be full of the Light that I receive from you.

That's what I love about this job. Hardly a day passes without a letter, e-mail, or phone call from a Friend with a new project, insight, or glimmering of the Divine Light, that he or she wants to share.

Sometimes the Light appears in unexpected places, and blazes forth with surprising intensity, as it does on the cover of this issue. Who would have imagined that a ten-year-old could write a poem with such wisdom and maturity? Who can doubt the presence of the Infinite in such work?

When Chuck Fager sent me a copy of Aliyah's poem and told me it had won first prize for writing by a Young Friend in his new anthology, *Best of Friends*, I knew that I had to share this Quaker prodigy with you, and with Friends everywhere. (See p. 148.)

It's always delightful when children (no matter what their gifts and talents) share their Light with us. That's when we realize that there truly is a Power higher, deeper, and greater than anything we can imagine—a Power that must be shared to be fully experienced.

Anthony Manousos

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*By Alicia Carter,
Berkeley Friends Meeting (PYM)*

I recently spoke about "The Quakers" to two high school English classes in our local school, Triple Junction High School. This public school is new, quite small, located between Petrolia and Honeydew in California's "Lost Coast" area. The English teacher, Suza Lambert, realized her students did not have adequate experience to read literature in its historical context, especially in that of religious experiences and teachings. She therefore incorporated a mini-course on world religions into her junior and senior classes. As the Mattole Valley's representative Quaker, I was asked to explain the "Quaker religion" in an hour of talk and response to questions. It turned out to be a wonderful experience for me, one of surprising focus and depth. The students had already heard speakers representing a number of religions: evangelical, fundamentalist Christianity, Buddhism, Shintoism, and Catholicism were ones I heard mentioned, I knew the Catholic presentation had been given by the Bishop of Santa Rosa and a nun, so I was a bit apprehensive about following such experienced "presenters" of a faith!

To prepare, I began re-reading Friends' literature as well as looking at my own experiences. I discussed this project with several "weighty Friends" from my meeting (Berkeley Friends

A Friendly Encounter with High School Students

Meeting), who also loaned me background materials. Finally, I attended Quaker Center's recent workshop on "Centering Prayer," given by Chris Ravndal from Pendle Hill. I certainly did not become an expert on "the Quakers" overnight, but I gained a deeper appreciation of the coherency of our "faith and practice." When I moved to the front of the class to speak, I invited the Divine Presence to be in our midst, to flow through me to these young people in ways approachable to them.

This did indeed seem to happen. There was a stillness underlying our interaction which was very powerful. The atmosphere was set initially by Suza. She made me feel welcome and prompted me to repeat portions of my presentation to the second class, when I hesitated. Her own questions, and respectful, interested response to our dialog did much to encourage both her students and me to reach beyond superficial "teaching" to a real exchange. I had prepared a typed summary which gave a brief history of Friends, terms, testimonies, quotations from George Fox and the principles which Friends derived from such; I included excerpts from a book by Jacques Lusseyran called *And There Was Light*. I then described our Meeting for Worship and the union we experienced there, with each other and the Presence, the Light. I showed how we carried this experience into our group decisions and policies, in the Meeting for Business. I gave examples of the outgrowth of Friends' testimonies in actions such as prison reform, abolition of slavery, protection of children, and so forth. I then gave illustrations showing the universality of two Friends' discoveries: the Inner Light, as illuminator and Teacher, and our unity in this Light with others of like intent.

To illustrate this latter truth, I related the experience that my husband Craig and I recently had in India. We went to India for Ayurvedic treatment for Craig, who was diagnosed with a terminal and untreatable blood disease. Many friends backed us. Some prayed

for us and some didn't. It didn't seem to make a difference as all were energetically, vividly present in our times of greatest need. We literally existed, I told the classes, on a tide of that love energy.

I also read to them selections from Jacques Lusseyran's book, *And There Was Light*. His childhood experience of being blinded by an accident and discovering the Inner Light seemed to make a deep impression on the class. I gave them a brief sketch of Jacques' history: at age 16, during the German occupation of Paris, he was one of seven major founders of the French resistance movement; at 19, he was captured, interrogated, imprisoned by the Nazi SS and finally sent to the notorious Buchenwald concentration camp. He spent 18 months there, one of the few survivors of his group of young activists.

Jacques discovered "light and joy" simultaneously, linked. As he said, "I found them and lost them together." Light and joy diminished, he explained, "when I was afraid." Jacques attributed his survival in the deadly environment of Buchenwald to, in large measure, the sustaining love of his friends. He, too, experienced the presence of his friends vividly on their inner link even when they were not present physically.

Finally, I found myself speaking approximately as follows:

"You are young yet, and you probably have not had the really hard experiences of your lives. When you do, you will need to know how to reach for strength. If you remember how to go to the still place of power within, the Light, you will find the help you need. It's very difficult to do this for the first time when you are in a time of crisis. Now is the time to discover the path within and make going there familiar and easy. Remember: your friends are there! You can take them with you. And, you can do this for your friends in trouble. Your love, your caring for your friends can give them the strength they need to meet their challenges.

(*"A Friendly Encounter," cont. on p. 139*)

(*"Friendly Encounter," cont. from p. 138*)

For, you see, we really are One."

Two of the final questions which were asked in the junior class seem to highlight our talk together. A girl said, "Can you summarize what Quakers are all about in one word?" I was still a moment, then responded, "Would a short phrase do?" She agreed. I said, "There is that of God in all persons." There was a deep silence in the room, and a powerful feeling of Spirit. Another girl then asked with great intensity, "Do you mean this is your belief, or that there really IS that of God in every person?" I looked deeply into her eyes and felt love move between us. "There REALLY IS that of God in every person!" I responded.

"What do you think about Jesus?" another girl asked.

I'd earlier been asked this question about the Quakers. I'd replied there was no "official" belief which was endorsed by all Quakers: some considered themselves Christians and some didn't. Now, asked directly about my own "belief," I was grateful to Friends to be able to reply frankly, without needing to personally represent "the Quakers." This is, to me, one of the main ways Friends differ from other "religions." From the beginning, they asked each other: "What sayest thou?" In speaking of our own experience of the Light, of God, we speak with authority beyond that of being a representative of a group's "belief": we can

thus speak directly from our hearts to the hearts of others.

"I feel very close to Jesus," I replied.

"Do you believe he died to save you from your sins?" the girl asked.

"My relationship with Jesus is not one of belief," I responded. "It seems to me Jesus has been kidnapped by people who are using him for their own purposes. That's not the Jesus I know."

"How do you know him?" the girl wondered.

"I met him in the Light," I explained. "That's his territory. He's all love and that's what the Light is all about so of course he's there."

"But then you BELIEVE in him," the girl insisted. "You have to believe in him to be saved."

"He's the bridge," I responded. "You don't have to 'believe in' a bridge to use it to cross a river. Either he is the bridge to take us Home or he is not. Your belief is not going to change that. If he's the bridge, then everyone who reaches for God, in whatever form, meets Jesus. They may not know it but this doesn't matter. He's a bridge for them, too. His love is freely given to all, and love is the bridge."

"Do you think he suffered for us?" asked the girl.

"Of course!" I responded. "He loves us, so of course he suffers for us and with us. The greater the love, the greater the suffering. Don't you suffer for your friends when they are in pain, in trouble? We all suffer for each other

as we love each other. It's impossible not to suffer for each other since we're actually not separate. In the Light, in that deep place of God in each of us, we are One."

After a moment of silence, the class broke up. As the students filed past me, where I sat in one of their desks, many gave me shy smiles and thanked me. One of these was the girl who asked the last question. She is known to me to be the one most adamant in denying validity to all belief systems but her own fundamentalist Christian sect. She is a very intelligent girl and, I sense, a deeply devout one. To be thanked by her, to make a connection with her past her learned response of fear and rejection, was a great gift to me.

Certainly I took my Friends with me into this, for me, unfamiliar experience of "public speaking." I am grateful for their support and inspiration. It was healing for me to speak of my powerful connection with Jesus after years of silence to avoid being "lumped with" those who call themselves "Christians" but base this on an exclusive belief system. Not wishing to offend another's "belief" or religion, I had effectively silenced myself from expressing my deepest spiritual experience in a form natural to myself. ▣

Alicia Carter joined Victoria Friends (B.C.) in 1975; transferred to Berkeley in late '80's. Widowed in December, '96. Former counselor, administrator, re-

Desert Flowers

Rain has blasted the desert into bloom—
purple, yellow, red-white-and-blue.
Shooting stars fill every crevice.
Every step crushes stalks
waiting years for rain—
any rain.

Radioactive dust
from Test #973
triggers a metal

bzz-zzz-zzz.

No one stirs.

At the cattle gate the guards
drag us to the chain-link lockups,
yank our plastic handcuffs tighter,

refuse our long-stemmed red roses.

"Don't want 'em. If the bomb's so bad.
How come there's all them desert flowers?"

—Dorothy Mack, *Corvallis Meeting (NPYM)*

*Dorothy Mack writes: "I wrote the poem about Nevada Desert Experience at the Las Vegas Test Site...when Franciscans, Friends, Brethren & Mennonites gathered in the desert for prayer and meditation, then worshiped at the gate to Mercury, Nevada, on Sunday. That year the desert was abloom with flowers, so much so that I had to put my tent on flowers when I camped out overnight at the site. During worship someone's wrist Geiger counter alarm went off, several times, because the air was radioactive from a test four days prior. At this protest we made a circle for worship, half of us inside the fence and half out, holding hands. I was one of those inside. About fifty of us were arrested, held for several hours, and released. The theme for that year was: Even the Stones Cry Out." —Reprinted from *The Best of Friends*, edited by Chuck Fager. Kimo Press, PO Box 82, Bellefonte, PA 16823.*

Witnessing In the Desert



by Nancy Lynch
Santa Barbara Meeting (PYM)

James Robertson and I joined Brother David Buer OFM (Franciscan) and eight other walkers for a 65-mile walk through the desert. One of the signs we carried read "Abolish Nuclear Weapons," another read "Stop Subcritical Tests" (the high-tech simulation tests that are now ongoing at the test site). We witnessed with our signs along the road from 5:30 to 6:30 AM and 5:00 to 6:00 PM as the workers traveled to and from work in special buses and their cars. The days were filled with walking, witnessing, sharing our stories, worshipping together and the setting up and taking down of our camp. Lunch and dinner were brought to us by supporters, who often shared their stories with us.

The first day's walk began at the Las Vegas offices of Bechtel, which manages the Test Site for the Department of Energy. Then we walked the corridor of the homeless, where Brother David works to relieve the misery of the poor, past St. Vincent de Paul's and the Salvation Army, where the poor and homeless manifest our misplaced priorities. In 1995, with no more cold war, \$20 billion was spent on nuclear related programs and that spending has increased. One addition is a new ignition facility funded at Livermore Labs for another \$10 billion! 3,461 workers continue to work at the test site and at Yucca Mountain nearby, being prepared for the nation's high level nuclear waste. The Test Site and Yucca Mountain are both on Treaty-agreed Shoshone land.

Nevada Nuclear Test Site —Author's Photo

At the end of the first day we camped on the edge of Las Vegas on the parking lot where the buses pick up the workers. This used to be well beyond town; now houses are near and casinos march out into the desert with us. The following days we walked by the side of the highway through the desert, where wild flowers bloomed, where it rained one night at a wild life refuge (how appropriate!) and it was cold enough to snow on nearby hills. It was generally cool to cold, with some wind, but the fierce winds of last year were absent. The sun finally gave us desert heat as we walked into The Healing Global Wounds camp Friday morning. That afternoon we walked the "Nuclear Stations of the Cross" next to the test site, and continued that walk into the site where we were welcomed by the Nye County Sheriff's Department. This arrest sequence results in a very short stay in a fenced area nearby and a citation, which is no longer followed by a notice to appear in court. James and I left the next morning after attending the Shoshone sunrise service, where we saw the full moon set just before the sun rose. It was a wonderful and exhausting experience! Those who wish to find out more, or make a donation, should contact the Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89127. ■

Nancy Crozier Lynch is clerk of the SCQM Peace Committee, and has served as clerk of the Peace Committee of PYM and her Meeting. She is also an artist whose work has been displayed in various galleries.

"WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION" DISCOVERED AT LAWRENCE LIVERMORE LABS!

By Eric Moon,
Berkeley Meeting (PYM)

Citizens of this century's foremost military empire, amused by the hypocrisy of recent diplomatic hand-wringing about "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq, resolved to bring that same attitude closer to home. "Citizen inspection teams," modeling our activities on those of UNSCOM teams in Iraq, have visited a number of nuclear weapons and research facilities in the US and abroad. Canadian nuclear activists led the way, crossing to attempt inspection of our Bangor, Washington, nuclear submarine base, but were—not unexpectedly—denied the "full access" we expect from the Iraqis.

On March 5, seven "citizen inspectors" from the Bay Area (including Wilson Riles, Jr., and Eric Moon from the AFSC) were arrested at Livermore Lab while on a fact-finding mission regarding US capability to design, develop and produce those "weapons of mass destruction" we fear once Iraqis—and Indians and Pakistanis—get them.

We returned with a team of 30 on March 26, led by retired nuclear physicist Ted Taylor, who talked about the historic opportunity we seem to be intent on wasting, to divest ourselves of nukes and implement an enforceable non-proliferation code. Barbara Lubin, of the Middle East Children's Alliance, recounted her visit to Iraq, where children are the first victims of our "sanctions bomb." Marylia Kelley, a neighbor to the Labs, remembered the children of Livermore itself, where plutonium has been detected in a city park miles away. ■

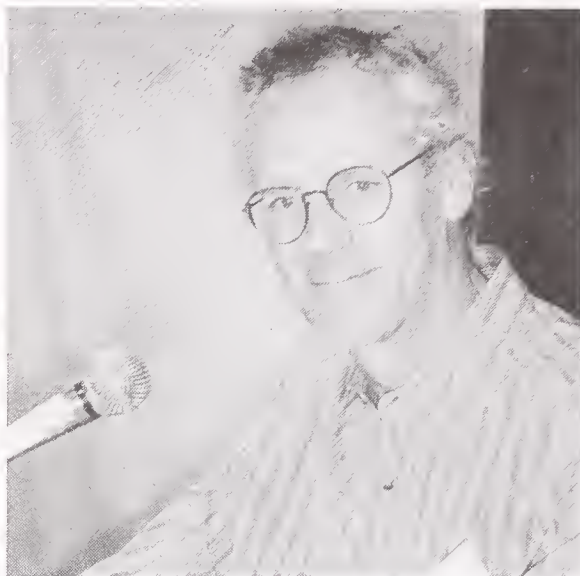
Eric Moon is the clerk of Pacific Yearly Meeting and also works on behalf of the Death Penalty and Peace Education Programs of the AFSC in San Francisco and Oakland.

Consensus As A Tool for Peace-building in the U.N.

THE ORIGIN AND USE OF CONSENSUS
AMONG FRIENDS

by Stephen Collett,
from a keynote talk
at Intermountain Yearly Meeting,
June 1997

The invitation to address IMYM has prompted me to compare consensus as we try to understand and employ it in the Religious Society of Friends, on the one hand, and on the other as it is used as the basis for most decision-making among member governments at the United Nations. Quakers recognized very early that if international affairs were to be carried on without the use of war, they would need to rely chiefly on consensus building. William Penn saw this as a primary function of the international organization which he proposes in his Essay on the Peace of Europe in 1693. Penn believes that "It were a great motive to the tranquillity of the world that they (meaning government representatives) could freely converse face to face and personally and reciprocally give and receive marks of civility and kindness." Friends have worked with this in mind at the League of Nations, where the Quaker Center opened in Geneva in 1925, in the program of Conferences for Diplomats from the 1950's through the 1970's, and at the United Nations centers in New York, Geneva and Vienna and elsewhere from the mid-1940's to today. The Quaker role is seen as supporting the process of international consensus building; that is, helping to bring governments together to identify and build cooperation on issues of mutual concern. Our observation over nearly three quarters of this century is that the UN process has had a tremendous impact on how governance—both national and global—is perceived and practiced, and is largely responsible for the degree of peace and stability we enjoy today. Consensus building throughout the UN has established standards and goals—in human rights, disarmament, peacemaking and sustainable development—by which governments



Steve Collett — Staff Photo

Our Quaker UN program has been a part of some major activities in consensus-building through fifty years at the United Nations, in disarmament, human rights, sustainable development and, not least, the constant reform and upgrading of the UN system itself. We find that opportunities to apply our method have expanded since the end of the cold war...

and communities can steer policy initiatives and measure their success in creating sustainable human societies. It is common to bemoan the lack of stronger teeth to enforce international law; but let's give credit for the fundamental global framework that consensus building has achieved through the United Nations.

Friends should be tender in our claim that a "sense of the meeting" is something other than consensus. The consensus process has many adaptations. With an open view we might find that other models offer tips we could learn from, and standards against which we might also judge ourselves.

Let's touch briefly on the origin and use of consensus among Friends.

Consensus grew "naturally" as a means of corporate decision-making, out of that commitment that cleaves to the leadings of the Spirit. For Friends, corporate discernment is felt to be generally of greater validity than the leadings of the individual. This is based on a perception that truth resides only with the Spirit and is therefore beyond what an individual can fathom outside of what is apportioned to each of us. This view is not Friends' alone. Within the Christian experience it seems to have been shared by the earliest Christian communities, with which early Friends identified. "Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together," Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians. Michael Sheeran reports that consensus was the basis for the decision-making process in the first period of the Jesuits, who termed it "communal discernment," though it was abandoned after Ignatius of Loyola's time. This link led Sheeran to investigate decision-making among Friends for his book *Beyond Majority Rule*, a solid primer for Friends in what is strong and what is weak about our use of consensus or sense of the Meeting.

Mike Yarrow in his book *Quaker Experiences in International Conciliation* describes early Friends' consensus process for regulating matters of property, conduct and general policy. These "...were talked over in a spirit of worship and decided by the group as a whole. The Clerk selected by the Meeting sought the 'sense of the Meeting' by gathering views of all the speakers, paying deference to the more cogent and earnest opinions, and formulating a minute, or record of action, on which all could agree. Since the truth of Christ by which they were guided was single, it was necessary for all to labor together to find this truth. No vote was taken and there was no division into majority and minority. Unanimity was not the aim, but unity in which all

(*"United Nations," continued on page 142*)

("United Nations," continued from page 141)

would go forward on a course of action, some enthusiastically and some less so, some even reluctantly, but not standing in the way."

Our sense of the meeting, like other forms of consensus, is a versatile tool, and does not have the same meaning or the same method of use in every circumstance. Its flexible, adaptive, and creative uses imply that the process of getting to the solution is as important as the result, indeed guarantees the result better than any other means.

Webster's dictionary notes the two usages of the word consensus: that of 1) unanimity, and that of 2) "the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned." Webster points out that the stricter definition, unanimity, is too narrow for many cases where consensus might apply, and prefers the second usage that could comprise the idea of "consensus of opinion" in a way that would not be redundant. This allows for the attributive or descriptive sense we are familiar with in popular usage, as in "consensus politics," or "a growing consensus."

While Friends didn't invent consensus decision-making and don't have a patent on its use, after our practice of applying its principles in our Religious Society for over three hundred years we may bring a sensitivity to its application that is useful in working with non-Quakers where consensus is pursued.

Consensus as a rule of governance is a time-honored practice among many peoples of this earth. It is implied in the Tao of government, in that the leader is admonished not to do anything, but to move with the people.

CONSENSUS AND WESTERN POLITICAL THEORY

How does consensus stack up in our Western political theory? Very strong, actually, when the alternatives are considered.

There are two fundamental, divergent views on the basis for law in society. One is the doctrine of fundamental rights, whereby law is chiefly intended to protect the liberty of the

individual, or in international terms, the state. Within the frame of liberty imposed by law the individual or state will be free to accumulate as much benefit as it can unto itself. This is also referred to as the "libertarian" view.

The alternative is consensual governance, whereby law is the means for strengthening the social bonds between individuals or states and their obligations to one another. International law is then the sum of the rules by which states have consented to be bound—expressly, as in a treaty, or by implication through acquiescing in a customary rule. Hegel termed this approach the "auto-limitation of sovereignty." Whereas the libertarian view struggles to explain the behavior of states as "supra-individuals," the consensual theory realizes that states are not persons but institutions: organizations which people have established among themselves for securing certain objectives, such as a system of order. While the subjection of nations to law is as yet imperfect and practical difficulties are numerous, there is no reason to suppose that international consensual governance is impossible; indeed, it may be inevitable, not only the best solution but the only effective one.

Friends accept this notion in professing the "perfectibility" of this world: that we can know God's order and be part of making it manifest. This is George Fox's point in the statement so often quoted as our peace testimony: not only do we abjure outward weapons, we seek a society "which takes away the occasion of war."

CONSENSUS AND THE UNITED NATIONS

How does a theory of consensual governance translate into practice at the United Nations? While consensus is not explicitly prescribed by the Charter of the Organization, its fundamental principles and purposes imply consensus building as its primary objective and its method. How otherwise than by a consensus process could nations achieve the following goals, from Article One of the Charter?

"1) To maintain international peace

and security and...to bring about by peaceful means...the settlement of international disputes or situations, which might lead to a breach of the peace;

2) To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen international peace;

3) To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character...

4) To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

In day-to-day terms these general purposes are subdivided into the annual cycle of meetings of the more than one hundred intergovernmental bodies under the UN: working groups, commissions, councils and assemblies covering as many different subject areas. In addition, come the emergency and special meetings held as needed to deal with situations arising. Supported by the UN Secretariat, which supplies information and helps to put intergovernmental decisions into practice, United Nations activities are built on the willingness of individual governments to take action together through the often slow, but in the UN's case very deliberate and often thorough, building of consensus.

That the legal circle of consent among nation-states encompasses these aims, and the implied subjugation of their own prerogative, is quite firm.

The Charter of the United Nations is an international treaty. In ratifying the Charter to assume membership, a country takes on the Charter's obligations as the law of the land, preeminent over national or sub-national laws. The questions of the day-to-day workings of the organization are how and where these obligations apply in economic, political and other fields.

QUAKERS AND THE U.N.

This is where the Quaker United
("United Nations," continued on page 143)

("United Nations," continued from page 142)

Nations program has found its call: we work to help diplomats to illuminate, clarify, and test proposals, and to find agreement in the vast and pressing field of issues on the international agenda. We apply our efforts to issues where Quaker international work has some history and familiarity, and to geographic areas where Quaker service and relief programs have been active on the ground. These priorities can expand, as we are often being encouraged by diplomats and UN staff who know our work to get involved in new areas, and we frequently find Quaker connections where we didn't know we had them.

We follow UN issues by attending the relevant UN meetings, reading the background documents, tracking group positions, analyzing and contributing to the preparation of background documents to be submitted by the UN Secretariat, and discussing positions with diplomats from those countries giving leadership on the issues. With this information we can identify the timing, the people and the topics for our informal, off-the-record meetings held at Quaker House near the UN in New York and in residential weekend conferences. Fifty years of arranging and hosting these "pre-negotiation" meetings have made them well-known and respected throughout the UN community, both for their even-handed treatment of sensitive issues and for their focused and carefully constructed approach to advancing consensus. At present our meetings are dealing with subjects as various as women's role in post-conflict peace-building, strengthening international controls on small arms, promoting sustainable global management of fresh water and forests, and UN reform, as well as situations of conflict in Korea, Burma, Central Africa and elsewhere.

While we admit to a degree of idealism in this work, Friends have been at this too long to be naïve—for example, to believe we are the only game in town. We know that there are other games afoot simultaneously as nations are pulled—often kicking and screaming—towards a more cooperative world order. We see the process as

slowly weaning governments from their clutch on sovereignty.

The "other games" to which governments are attentive at the United Nations include responding to the forces of world opinion (that is, looking decent among their peers) and of the constant currency of quid pro quo (or tit for tat), whereby friendship, support, tolerance and trade are exchanged throughout the range of issues under debate.

But United Nations membership provides a counterbalance in the following ways to add perspective to the motives that drive states:

- its role in the collection, analysis and distribution of information helps to create a common factual language;
- it provides a venue for the interplay which establishes personal relationships and understanding among representatives of governments;
- and finally, this intercourse is the means by which governments are introduced to international perspectives and global linkages to their own system, and in turn, are led to develop a sense of international identity for themselves.

ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF CONSENSUS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

You may say that this is all very well, but what about the quality of the consensus achieved at the United Nations? What is its breadth and depth?

Dean Rusk referred to the United Nations process as "parliamentary diplomacy." Compromise is, of course, a necessary function of this process, in a much more explicit way than Friends would be comfortable with in our own councils. But the fact that UN bodies can only make recommendations to governments, and that these will carry maximum weight if adopted unanimously, constitutes a powerful force towards negotiation of solutions that are nearly unanimous, even if they include compromises. Areas where the use of consensus is not the rule in decision-making, as in the Security Council of the Cold War years, are the exception.

At the UN a great deal of emphasis and energy go into building unity towards an eventual decision. This is carried out by the rotation of leadership and representation among member gov-

ernments in a system which builds from the micro level of immediately neighboring countries, and up through sub-regional and regional groupings (Asia, Africa, Latin America, island states, European and others) to larger political affiliations such as the global North and South. This careful, reiterative treatment of each issue gives the Quaker UN Office many opportunities to address the process as it develops. Most often we choose target issues at an early stage and repeatedly arrange meetings to support discussion as they move through the regional groups to global debate and decision-making. In the UN process of consensus building the role of competent chairpersons is akin to the importance of good clerking as defined above by Mike Yarrow. Some of the lessons Friends might learn from comparison with the UN process include:

- an extensive preparation of issues, by the gathering of background information and the holding of exploratory meetings to air views and test accepted perspectives;
- the common recognition of the need to incorporate others' views as you form your own;
- and a focus on the importance of achieving results, which are cumulative, though they can be reviewed and revised as needed.

The UN process is actually quite different from the congressional or parliamentary struggle between factions that will or will not support a proposition. The ballast and rudder which give the UN process an over-all constancy and direction are the stringent rules among member governments on consultation, representation, transparency and accountability. By these rules information is assembled and analyzed and views are tested and merged in an increasingly inclusive scope towards forming a global agreement on the nature of the problem, the options for addressing it and the agreed policy directions (national and international) to be taken.

Certainly at times, towards the ends of negotiating sessions, for example, the impetus to compromise may be strengthened by lack of time, the need

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for a result and the desire to get home. Those in positions of leadership at these discussions need to be wary and to ensure that unanimous decisions do not conceal differences of opinion that will obstruct or delay action or results. Again we are reminded that consensus is a delicate tool, not to be abused as an end in itself. It is useful here to make a comparison with the scientific community, which appreciates a consensus of opinion as much as any group, but where the resort to compromise is little tolerated and the validity of work relies heavily on registering the voice of dissent.

Compromise is an important quality of decision-making within this consensual framework at the UN. The debate between delegations urging drastic action in the name of idealism and delegations opposed to drastic action on pragmatic grounds is an exchange that profits both sides and is often the starting point for building an agreed course of action. There are occasions in the human rights field, for example, when it is clear that a decision adopted by a majority vote calling for vigorous action may exert a stronger influence on the governments in the minority than a watered-down compromise, and there are times when compromise is not deemed appropriate.

All told, nearly 80% of the General Assembly's resolutions and decisions are adopted by consensus today, and the veto in the Security Council has been used less than a handful of times since the end of the Cold War. Most often where votes are taken in the General Assembly and elsewhere, they are serving as a kind of straw poll, a measure of the current degree of consensus on an issue. Most of those questions on which a vote is taken are brought back in a later cycle of meetings, and an issue is removed from the UN agenda only when it has been satisfactorily resolved by a strong consensus.

Dag Hammarskjöld said that "conference diplomacy and parliamentary diplomacy should not replace quiet diplomacy." Our commitment to consensus building leads us to accept the gradualism of the UN process, that

peacebuilding is a long-term piece-by-piece undertaking, and that we are required to work with an imperfect consensus while still respecting the positions of those who hold themselves out of the process, or would slow it. Again, let us remember the divergence we often experience between theory and practice with the process of agreement in our Friends' meetings.

Even an imperfect consensus can be a powerful tool. I feel strongly about this in the case of Bosnia, so often referred to as a failure of the UN. There were, and continue to be, many failures in Bosnia (not least the political failures of Western Europe and the USA in the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia), and excruciating tragedies like Srebrenica and Tuzla.

But it was an immense achievement to keep an international presence on the ground all through that war, negotiating safety zones and the passage of humanitarian shipments at every crossroads, every village, keeping three and a half million people alive through four years until a political approach was at last brokered. This was an historic humanitarian achievement by the UN, founded on a very imperfect consensus.

CONSENSUS BUILDING IN ACTION

In our program working alongside diplomats and UN staff we have learned to respect and admire these professionals for their skills and dedication in the job of building consensus.

Let me give you an example of creative consensus building told to me by an ambassador at the United Nations from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), or North Korea. Quakers first met this man, Kim Jong Su, as a host for our first delegation to Pyongyang in 1980. At our last meeting in New York in September, 1996, he told me this story.

When Kim Jong Su came to New York he was eager to see everything, so he got a car and driver from his Mission's garage to look around, and ended up out in New Jersey, beyond his driver's range of familiarity, lost and without a map. There was nothing to do but stop and ask for help but there was

no one around, no houses, no stores. At last he saw a car coming the other way. Kim Jong Su got out and raised his hand, and the car stopped. The ambassador explained that he was lost and needed to get back to New York City. The young man simply said, "Follow me," did a U-turn and led them, fifteen minutes away, to the entrance of the Holland Tunnel with Manhattan on the other side. He waved, turned around again and drove off.

Four years later Kim Jong Su met the Reverend Billy Graham, who had just returned from a trip to North Korea and was being hosted at dinner at the DPRK Mission to the UN. He told Billy Graham how impressed he was by this demonstration of selflessness and compassion on his first outing in America. Billy Graham said, "That man was a good Christian," and Kim Jong Su replied, "No, that man was a good communist!" But the end of the story, he emphasized, was that they agreed that the man was a good person.

Our Quaker UN program has been a part of some major activities in consensus-building through fifty years at the United Nations, in disarmament, human rights, sustainable development and, not least, the constant reform and upgrading of the UN system itself. We find that opportunities to apply our method have expanded since the end of the Cold War as the full scope of the UN agenda has been loosened from the grasp of bipolar politics.

Increasingly, problem solving on today's issues requires a consensus approach. The topics currently on the international agenda are closely linked to what Friends understand to be the building blocks of peace. These include:

- the building of a common approach to real human security;
- environmental recovery and the adoption of sustainable development paths in both the poor and the rich nations;
- the universalization of human rights and the broad application of standards which have been created under the UN;
- and the reform and strengthening of the UN to prepare it for the tasks of the 21st century.

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("United Nations," continued from page 144)

Quakers, under the banner of the Friends World Committee for Consultation, were one of the first non-governmental organizations officially accredited to the United Nations in 1947 under Article 71 of the UN Charter. The Article is referred to as "Eleanor Roosevelt's article" for its opening to a consultative role for the

non-governmental sector. We are now one of nearly 1,700 organizations granted this "consultative" status. Our role, however, remains quite distinctive, helping to identify issues where consensus building is required and providing opportunities to further understanding and agreement in those areas.

The special part that Friends have

been able to play in peace building through the United Nations is a gift of grace. Let us give thanks for this opening and ask for guidance, that we may play a useful role where governments strive to understand and address challenges today. And let us be attentive to the lessons for our own Society which our experience working in the world may open for us. □

The Guatemala Student Loan Project

*By Harriet Lewis,
Redwood Forest Meeting*

For centuries, Mayans, and especially Mayan women, have had little choice in what kind of life they could live. Mostly illiterate in any language and often unable to speak the official language of Guatemala, their lives have been dictated by poverty, childbearing, heavy labor and early death. Now more choices are opening up, though not without enormous obstacles and challenges.

In 1973, the small Guatemala Friends Worship Group began a student scholarship/loan program to provide more opportunities for disadvantaged students. Since then, the program has grown from one student to an average of 90 students and includes an annual excursion by students to important cultural and historic sites, and a conference for both students and graduates. By 1996, the total number of students helped passed 450 and most are now practicing their professions. Contact is maintained with graduates through several newsletters per year. Students attend either public secondary schools which offer specialized careers upon graduation or public universities in several places throughout the country. They attend private universities only if they cannot study elsewhere for their career, or if the student works and can only attend weekend courses. The reason for this is that private schools are much more expensive. No students are sent to the United States for study.

Through personal visits and two mailings per year, the committee in Guatemala maintains contact with about 200 Guatemalan organizations that recommend candidates. We search especially for women and Mayans with very limited financial resources whose



Teresa Veronica Ortiz and Maria Concepcion — Author's photo

careers can benefit their primarily rural communities. Our students study to become doctors, professional and auxiliary nurses, rural health technicians, agronomists, social workers, and lawyers and other careers which benefit rural communities. The selection process includes a review of each applicant's recommendations, grades, and financial needs, and a personal interview.

Students receive a monthly check for regular expenses and most also receive help for medical and dental equipment, uniforms, textbooks, glasses, and health emergencies. All of these expenses are expected to be reimbursed at no interest and little by little after they begin earning a salary. Expenses for the excursions and conferences are not repaid.

ENJOYING AN ANNUAL EXCURSION

Since its inception, the program has been maintained by unpaid volunteers both in Guatemala and in the United States. It is supported in several ways: by donations from individuals and groups in 10 countries, though mainly from the United States; from the sale of Guatemalan products by Friends Meetings and other groups in the United States, and from the repayment of student loans.

PROFILES OF OUR STUDENTS

The following are examples of typical students. Fictitious names have been used.

Maria del Carmen Alvarado Menchu's family lives in a small Maya Kaqchikel speaking village in the central highlands. She is the sixth of eight children and the first girl to have completed junior high school. She passed her entrance exam and is now attending nursing school. When she graduates, she will be qualified to work in a hospital or health clinic. In a rural setting, she will probably provide primary health care to her community. Her loan from us pays for her room and board, bus fares, school supplies and uniforms. For Maria, this chance to qualify for a career with good job opportunities is a way to help herself, her family and her community.

Juan Estuardo Pablo Domingo comes from the western part of Guatemala where the Miam language is spoken.

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Sharing Our Light Through Epistles

By Anne Friend,
Los Angeles Meeting (PYM)

What do we want in an epistle? Are the criteria different for those we send than for those we most value receiving? If so, how and why?

I believe that our yearly meetings could greatly benefit from consideration of these questions before the yearly meeting sessions begin, possibly to be followed up by interest groups at the yearly meeting itself.

As a member of the Pacific Yearly Meeting epistle committee in 1997, I was given a copy of the 1996 epistle, introduced to the convenor (who served in 1996) and the other new member of the committee. We were also told where to go to read epistles received from other yearly meetings during the year, if we wanted to do that. That was all. *Faith and Practice* did not provide useful guidance. That seems very little preparation for writing a document that is going to Friends all over the world, a document which represents us to people whose only idea of our lifestyle may be USA television and who may emphasize aspects of our shared tradition that many of us say we would like to discard and who may put what is most important to many of us at the bottom of their lists.

The committee then met several times, drafted an epistle, had the first reading and posted it, made changes

and had the final reading, made corrections for clarity, and handed it over to the recording clerk. Just like every year.

There were four pairs of major criticisms of the draft, just like every year. It said "too much or not enough" about 1) the scenery and physical surroundings, 2) our spiritual state, problems we were dealing with, and attempts to reach unity, 3) activities of individual Friends, Friendly meetings, and groups of Friends, 4) activities during Meeting session, variety of activities, and how much the various age groups enjoyed them.

There seem to be four groups of Friends, each wanting an epistle with a different emphasis. One wants to send a verbal snapshot of the yearly meeting with considerable visual imagery. One wants to send a "state of the meeting report." One wants to send considerable detail about Friends' concerns and how they are acting on them in the world. One wants to focus on recreating the feelings of warmth and love we share for those who will read the epistle.

I believe we should give careful consideration to these different types of epistle, decide how we want to present ourselves to other Friends, and draft guidelines for the benefit of our epistle committees.

We do have some guidance in our experience of the epistles from other meetings. Some years ago, I had the

pleasure of being reading clerk for Pacific Yearly Meeting. As I read all of the epistles PYM had received to make the selections for reading at plenary, the ones that spoke most to me had three qualities. First, there was a real sense of spiritual centering; second, accounts of decision making (not always successful); third, resonance with something on the agenda for a particular plenary session.

I very much doubt that any Yearly Meeting reads all of every epistle aloud at its annual session. In some, the clerk may put them all in a file, unread, and takes the file to the yearly meeting session where they are available, but it may happen that no one takes time to read them. Only what is read aloud at the plenary sessions communicates. What do we want to happen to ours? Do we care?

I believe we do care what happens to ours. Thinking about the ones we hear that move us, that open us to the Spirit, that comfort us in our lack of perfect unity, can help us decide what to aspire to.

Your epistle committee can do a lovely postcard, a centered spiritual report, an inspiring work-in-the-world report, or let others know what a party they missed. Just tell them which before you see the first draft. They do not combine well in equal parts, especially not on just one page. And not more than one page seems to be the only thing we currently agree on. ■

(*"Guatemala," continued from page 145*)

Though 35, married and with four children, and employed as a primary school teacher, he is studying to become a bilingual [Spanish/Mam] social worker. In this career, he will help villagers interface with government agencies to provide for their basic needs such as potable water, schools, better roads, etc. To earn his university degree he must attend the national university in Quetzaltenango, three hours by bus from his home. He had to decide whether to attend full-time and live away from home, or to work part-time

and attend the university on weekends. His choice of a weekend schedule resulted in a smaller loan with the added benefit that he can spend more time with his family.

A 12-minute video cassette of the program shows students being interviewed and participating in an annual conference. It is available on loan from:

Meg Goetz
306 Mellifont Ave.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

In 1995, direction of the program was formally assumed by Redwood Forest Friends Meeting in Santa Rosa, California, with Guatemala Friends Monthly Meeting as its administrative arm. Contributions should be made out to Redwood Forest Friends Meeting and mailed to:

Guatemala Scholarship Program
P.O. Box 1831
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Please note that all ontributions are tax-deductible.

Friendly News

Colorado Region

The Spring Gathering of Colorado Regional was hosted by the growing and thriving Colorado Springs Meeting on April 19th. Nearly fifty Friends attended from the Mountain View (Denver), Boulder, Fort Collins, and Colorado Springs Meetings and participated in the day-long event.

Junior and Senior Young Friends experienced a "Walk in Their Footsteps," a guided tour and discussion group led by the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission. They spent the afternoon walking through the more impoverished areas of the city, talking about the effects of poverty on young people including the services they need from shelters. The experience ended at the Colorado College's soup kitchen. The leaders were very impressed by our young people, especially their good questions, their sensitivity, their understanding of what they were seeing, and their reflections on how the experience would impact their lives.

Clerk Suzanne Taylor of the Fort Collins Meeting convened her last Meeting for Business in this position. (Barbara Kosar of Mountain View Meeting assumes the position of clerk.) Among many issues discussed was the Fall Gathering, October 2-4, at the Highlands Presbyterian Camp near Allenspark, Colorado. We look forward to this new location and reduced cost to encourage even greater participation. Jonathan Taylor (Fort Collins Meeting) reported that FWCC is in the process of laying down the Right Sharing of World Resources and International Quaker Aid projects. Colorado Regional Friends expressed concern about these decisions and encouraged dialogue about these issues in our individual meetings as well as at IMYM.

The afternoon program entitled "Affluenza" featured the PBS video followed by a group discussion facilitated by Marielle Oetjen, a member of the Colorado Springs Meeting and someone who was interviewed for the PBS special. The theme of "simplicity" rang true among Friends gathered as many shared their challenges and desires to simplify their lives. Many expressed concern about how our young people

are targeted as unlimited consumers and the challenges we face as parents and adults trying to impress upon them the value and responsibility of leading simpler lives. By resounding consensus, the theme for the Fall Gathering will be "Affluenza II": the second part of the PBS special will air in July. The program will include both videos, group and panel discussions, and a special showing of the video for the Junior and Senior Young Friends.

Until fall, Friends challenged one another to work individually and together toward simplifying our lives and supporting one another in this endeavor.—*Maria Krenz, Boulder Meeting*

Willamette Quarter

Violence prevention was hard work for Oregon Friends this spring. In mid-May a high school shooting in Springfield, Oregon (part of the Eugene metropolitan area) moved Friends throughout Oregon to question what can be done.

Eugene Friends Meeting had already begun addressing the problem of violence prevention in youth and adults before the Springfield shootings took place. Three Eugene Friends had met with a clearness committee and were approved to move forward with their calling to become pastoral counselors at Skipworth Juvenile Facility in Eugene, which later in May housed the accused Springfield juvenile shooter, as well as many other youths in need. Previous to the shooting, Eugene Friends had encouraged a community Gun Turn-in Day which was held as planned the weekend after the shootings.

Ceasefire Oregon has sponsored days for two years when gun owners may turn in firearms which then will never be used again. Eugene Friend John Saemann reports that 196 guns have been turned in and destroyed in two years of gun turn-ins in Oregon. Nearly as many weapons were turned in the weekend after the Springfield shootings. Tax deductible donations to Ceasefire Oregon can be sent to John Saemann at 1775 Adkins St #2, Eugene, Oregon 97401-5062.

Salem Friends Meeting sponsored and Friends attended an Alternative To Violence Project (AVP) workshop in April, and Multnomah Monthly Meet-

ing member, Simeone Hyde, encouraged participation in three AVP workshops in the Portland area this spring.

Willamette Quarterly meeting, which met May 2 in Salem, approved a minute from North Pacific Yearly Meeting regarding the white supremacists Aryan Nations, which will be marching in Coeur D'Lane, Idaho the same weekend of Yearly Meeting.

The next Willamette Quarterly Meeting is scheduled October 10 at Sky-camp in the Cascades east of Eugene.—*Carole Lindell-Ross, Eugene Meeting*

Montana Gathering of Friends

Anne Frank Story Comes to Sheridan, Wyoming. A community project engaged most of the Sheridan Quaker Worship group in Winter of 1998 with Georgiana Foster, as Project Director, and Bob Murphy, as Chairman of People for Human Rights of Sheridan County (PHR).

Aiming to nurture an attitude of tolerance by increasing awareness of the dangers of discrimination, PHR—a small grassroots group—brought to Sheridan a two-month series of educational activities for people ages 10 to adult. The focal point was a traveling exhibit, the Anne Frank Story, developed by the Anne Frank Center USA in New York City. The acclaimed exhibit depicts, through photographs and text, Anne Frank's life in the context of the Holocaust. It was displayed at the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library during the month of February, 1998.

The project was a collaboration of local organizations, businesses, churches, schools and 200 volunteers. Funding was from state and local agencies and individuals. High school students, teachers and artists created a life-size replica of Anne's room and a scale model of the building where her family and others hid from the Nazis. PHR organized a nine-part seminar series on topics of discrimination relating to the theme "Beyond Violence in Society: Then and Now." These national and regional speakers also spoke in the local schools.

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(*"Friendly News," continued from page 147*)

Over 4,000 students and adults were guided through the exhibit: nearly one third of our population. As many heard the speakers. Since then, some young people have joined PHR and students at a local middle school have formed a human rights club.

Clearly, the impact of the Anne Frank Story project was widely felt throughout our community. This project has helped us see what a small group can initiate! It has just been nominated for a state award, 1998 Philanthropy Days-Collaborative Community Project Award, to be announced June 18, 1998.

—Georgiana Foster and Bob Murphy, Sheridan Worship Group, MGOF Quarterly

A Walk with Aliyah Shanti

Imagine having the chance to meet "Willie" Blake or "Wolfie" Mozart when they were ten years old. That's how I felt about going to Olympia, Washington, to meet ten-year-old Aliyah Shanti (see cover).

Ali has had an extraordinary education, with extraordinary results. Homeschooled by her parents, David Albert and Ellen Sawislak, who were co-founders of New Society Publishing House, Ali has been allowed to pursue her own interests, or as Friends say, to "follow her leadings." As a result, Ali became the youngest member of the Pacific Northwest Herpetological Society, the youngest docent at Wolf Haven International (a sanctuary for captive wolves), the second youngest member of the Capital Area Youth Symphony, a member of the Portland Chorale when it sang at N.Y.'s Carnegie Hall, a professional musician at Pike Place Market in Seattle (earning \$1,300 over the course of the summer), a composer of two musical scores that won prizes at the Washington State Music Teacher's Association (her sonata received its world premiere in Olympia and at Seattle's Frye Art Museum). Ali has not spent a single day in a "regular" class.

When I arrived at "Shantiniketan" (the name on the door of the house; it means "School of Peace"), her father

ushered me in and showed off the family "treasures"—pictures, musical instruments, and a menagerie of lizards, birds, and snakes, each with a colorful name and story.

"That's Ali's room," David said, beaming. "It's a mess." There was nothing judgmental or defensive in his remark, so I replied, "I love messes."

Ali laughed with approval and delight.

After the house tour, David said, "You need to go for a walk in the woods with Ali. That's the best way to get to know her."

Ali skipped out of the house like a fawn, then slowed down to let me catch up. I had the feeling that she did the same thing during our conversation.

As we walked along the street, Ali pointed out various flora and fauna:

"That's a giant sequoia. It's not a native plant, and it's very rare around here. Settlers from California brought seeds here." (I later learned that when Ali first identified this tree as a sequoia, her father had been skeptical, so Ali brought a cone, a small branch, and some bark with her to Washington, DC, where they were identified by her grandmother, a docent at the Smithsonian Institute. Ali was 6 ½ at the time.)

"Who's your favorite composer?" I asked.

"I don't have favorites," she replied. "Right now I am playing Rachmaninov and Ravel." Then she paused, frowned, and thought for a moment. "I guess like Bach the best."

"When did you learn to play the violin?"

"I am still learning!" she replied, laughing. "I started playing when I was two. I went to a concert of Handel's Messiah, and I told my parents that I wanted to learn to play the violin. So they bought me one, a little one, and I started to take lessons."

Some huge black crows cawed at us menacingly from the roof of a house.

"I'd like to do a study of crows," Ali informed me.

"What would you investigate?" I asked.

"I'd like to know when they are most active," she replied.

"Do you have any hypothesis about this?" I wondered.

"Yes," she explained. "I think that crows are probably most active on

Monday when kids and adults have gone to school, and they can forage for food without being bothered."

Hmm, I thought. Could this be a metaphor for Ali herself?

As we entered the dense, moss-covered woods, Ali was in her element. She not only could identify most of the plants, she knew something about the history and how they interact with each other. She noted that the reason that the sword ferns survive all winter is they have a tough protective covering on their leaves.

She would skip from scientific explanations to pure fantasy.

"Want to see a lyin' tree?" she said.

"Does it growl?" I asked.

"No!" she replied, laughing. "It's lyin' on its side. Actually, it's a birch tree."

As we walked down the trail, she asked, "Want to see me walk on water?"

"Sure," I replied, at this point believing that with Ali, nothing is impossible.

She capered across a dried up slough.

"This was a pond in the winter, and now I can walk across it," she said, smiling. "So I am walking on water."

When we returned home, we spent the rest of the afternoon talking about art and music. Ali played some of her compositions on the piano, sang her versions of Blake's songs ("Ah, Sunflower" and "Echoing Green"), and shared her watercolors (some based on the Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*, a family favorite). David read me some of his offbeat versions of Biblical narratives. Then we had bean soup. ("Because we are Bean-ites!" David quipped.)

I never spent a more enjoyable, playful, and stimulating afternoon in my life.

On my way home on the plane, I read David's book about homeschooling his daughters entitled *And The Skylark Sings With Me*. I found it an utterly fascinating critique of American education as well as a joyous celebration of the creative potential in every child. But that's another story. For now, I am grateful to the Creator for allowing me to see a child in whom the divine Seed has been encouraged to grow to its fullest. Would that every child had the same opportunity to become all that the Creator intends!

—Anthony Manousos, Whitleaf Meeting/Whittier First Friends Church

Memorial Minutes

Russell Aucoin-Unruhe

Surrounded by his wife, family, and friends, Russell died in Santa Cruz on April 2, 1997, after a sustained and thoughtful fight against melanoma. Many people were moved by the unfolding of his spirit during the last months of his illness and were deeply touched by the way he opened up to those close to him. He was in Meeting for Worship four days before he died, and experienced some confusion and difficulty walking only for a few weeks.

A beloved member of the Santa Cruz Friends Meeting since the 1980's, Russ met Ellie in 1979, when her daughter Jennifer was five. They were introduced by Joan Forest at an anti-nuclear meeting held at Ian Thiermann's house. Russ and Ellie were married under the care of the Meeting at Ben Lomond Quaker Center on August 21, 1983. Their daughter Adriana was born at home in 1987.

Russell's parents, Bob and Virginia Unruhe of Ojai, California, and his brother Steve were with him when he died. His other brother and sisters—Sue, David, and Trish—and friends from Meeting were close to him in his final days.

A few days after Russell's death, about 50 members of the extended Aucoin-Unruhe family and several close friends gathered for a family service in the Redwood Grove at Quaker Center where he and Ellie were married. They shared many memories of Russ' life and played music that he loved.

Because of his commitment to promoting peace and justice and protecting the environment, Russ moved to the Santa Cruz area after completing high school in Culver City and attending Santa Monica Junior College and the University of California, Los Angeles. In 1980, he became the "Chimney Sweep" of the San Lorenzo Valley, where he helped restore many homes after the 1989 earthquake.

One of the projects that Russ was

passionate about was preventing a dam at Zayante Canyon. Part of his effort was the "creation" of a new endangered species, the Zayante hump-backed banana slug, which became the emblem of the successful anti-dam effort.

In the last years of his life, Russ was active in chimney sweep, Quaker, and melanoma support groups via his home computer.

In his memory, Russell's parents created the Adriana Aucoin-Unruhe College Fund. Contributions are welcome at the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union. □

Krista Boling

Krista Boling was born October 13, 1956, to Ron and Karen Hengst in Cornwall, New York. Russell, her only brother, was born four years later. All were members of Cornwall Monthly Meeting. Ron remembers Krista as "always bubbling and active and interested in things." Krista's lifelong love of books, the arts, and swimming hold many memories for Karen. Strength and fortitude come to mind when Russ thinks of Krista. She protected him as a child as well as caring for others, mainly children and animals.

Krista's German heritage was very important to her. Most summers of her childhood were spent in Germany visiting her grandparents. She spoke German and would get annoyed with her mother when she sometimes wouldn't speak it with her.

The Hengst family moved to Newtown, Pennsylvania, when Krista entered high school and the family became active members of Newtown Monthly Meeting. A 1974 graduate of George School, Krista always treasured her memories of her time there, especially the art classes.

It was at Temple University that she met Ed Boling. If it wasn't love at first sight, it was close to it. Ed was simultaneously watching TV and perusing a quantum mechanics book in a lounge when Krista came in with a dog, who proceeded to chew Ed's book—a great conversation opener! Ed, who doesn't think of himself as a spontaneous person, then invited Krista to spend the next day at the beach with him.

Soon after receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree, Krista was accepted into the Peace Corps and went to Africa. It turned out that Swaziland was too far from Philadelphia and, more specifically, from Ed. Her parents remember several homesick phone calls. Her voice was as close as it sounded in a subsequent call; she was in Philadelphia at Ed's house!

Ed and Krista married in 1979 and over the next dozen years had four children: Marie, Paul, Jean, and George. After living in Philadelphia and West Virginia, they moved to Baltimore, Maryland, in 1981. In 1986 they moved to Newtown and settled into the same neighborhood where Krista had lived as a teenager. She loved living in Newtown, being a part of Newtown Meeting again, living near family and old friends, and even having the same family doctor as before.

To Ed, one of Krista's greatest gifts was "being able to take any situation and make it into a wonderful experience." This was especially true a few years ago when Ed found himself having to take a job in California. Krista moved the family to California in very short order and started the process of building their new life.

She did not wait for her new neighborhood and Meeting to come to her. She became the class parent and a weekly classroom volunteer in George's kindergarten class. At the Palo Alto Meeting she rejuvenated the Young Friends program with a variety of activities.

To Krista, the family and community were all-important. She had a way of appearing with a pot of soup or flowers from her garden when she would hear of someone's illness. In her brother Russ's words, "She was a true Quaker. I don't think you can get any more Quaker than Krista." □

Terra Ciel Dietel-Rice

Terra Ciel Dietel-Rice was born at home November 5, 1985 in Sebastopol, California and died in Sebastopol February 8, 1998. Diagnosed

(*"Memorial Minutes," continued on page 150*)

(“Memorial Minutes,” continued from page 149)

with cystic fibrosis at two and half years, Terra and her parents Aline Dietel and Mark Rice began to follow a path of rigorous pulmonary and nutritional treatment and therapy designed to help her thrive.

Despite her genetic illness, Terra lived an active life, playing the piano from age three and beginning violin lessons at age nine. She played the violin in several youth orchestras and string ensembles. Music was her love. She played in rehearsals and concerts with a composure and focus which allowed her to express her own essence and the essence of the music she performed. Terra also loved camping, hiking, canoeing, bicycling, ice and roller skating, playing with her sister Molly, putting on plays with her friends, reading, drawing, all kinds of crafts and dreaming. A junior member of Redwood Forest Friends Meeting in Santa Rosa, California, Terra looked forward to Quaker Youth Group each First Day.

When she was nine, Terra was diagnosed with liver disease, a rare complication of cystic fibrosis. When asked how she felt about adding liver disease to other health challenges, she simply said, “It is what is given.” While she waited three years for a liver transplant, Terra had to severely limit most of her physical activities, except music. She faced hospitalizations and diminishing health with great courage.

On January 25th, 1998, Terra underwent an eight-hour liver transplant operation. Her new liver was functioning so well that after eight days she was sent home to complete her recovery. She hoped to roller skate and bike again and wanted to learn ballet and to play the accordion. She took time to dream out the living room window from the couch where she lay and saw a vibrant double rainbow shining through the kitchen window two days before she died of a sudden abdominal hemorrhage.

Terra’s first name means “earth.” Her middle name, Ciel, is French for “the heavens or sky.” Terra joined earth and heaven in the way she lived and touched many with her pure and gentle spirit. She is survived by her parents Mark Rice and Aline Dietel, and by her younger sister Molly and older brother Isaac. ■

Ted Irving

Ted Irving was born Edward Burroughs Irving, Jr. on February 5, 1923 in Philadelphia, PA, to parents Roberta Rea (Neill) Irving and Edward B. Irving. His brother, Robert, was four years his junior. Ted attended Penn Charter School and Haverford College, both Quaker schools in the Philadelphia area. Graduating early in 1943, Ted served in the Marines on Guam during World War II. After his discharge in 1946, he married Marion Kirk of Swarthmore, PA, and attended Yale University for his M.A. and Ph.D. in English. While living in New Haven, CT, his three children were born: Andrew (Sandy), Edward III (Terry) and Alison.

In 1960 Ted accepted a tenured position at the University of Pennsylvania in the English Department. Over his career he became a leading scholar on the epic poem, *Beowulf*.

While many of his ancestors had been Friends, Ted was raised Episcopalian; in the mid-1960s the Irvings joined the Swarthmore Monthly Meeting. For many years, Ted served on various committees and chaired discussion forums on First Day. In 1982, Ted was divorced and married Judith Moffett, a poet and teacher at Penn. They enjoyed many common interests, among them gardening, traveling, and, of course, literature. They spent a year living in England as visiting professors. After his retirement in 1993, Ted and Judy moved to Salt Lake City to enjoy exploring the West.

Ted soon became an integral part of the Salt Lake Monthly Meeting, actively participating in all aspects of its community life. Through his teaching and sharing his love of poetry, he expanded the lives of all those he touched. Though retired, he maintained active academic relationships with many previous students and colleagues and continued to cultivate their intellectual lives.

“Gaffer”—as he was known to his family—made regular trips back East to see his grandchildren. In January 1998, Ted and Judy moved to Cincinnati, Judy’s hometown, to be closer to their families. However, shortly before leaving Salt Lake, Ted was diagnosed with lung cancer and after a swift illness died on March 6, 1998. He is sorely missed and will be remembered as an outstanding teacher, a loving husband, a devoted father, an affectionate grandfather and a very good Friend. ■

Book Review

Through My Window: More Autobiographical Sketches in Poetry and Prose by Lois Barton. Published by Spencer Butte Press, 84889 Harry Taylor Road, Eugene, OR 97405. Price, \$8.50. Book review by Milena Thompson.

If you live in the city, and long for a taste of the spirit of life in the Oregon countryside, I recommend spending a quiet afternoon, or even a few moments with Lois Barton’s latest book, *Through My Window*. And if you are fortunate to live in the country and near the forest, you will relate to the beautiful descriptions of the birds, the ferns, the trees and the animals that Lois writes about, in both poetry and prose, in this little book. One can sense the wonder she feels for God’s creation, and the oneness she shares with it all. There is poignancy in her memory of a houseful of children, and experiences in her early years. But she leaves one with a sense of everchanging life, and the positive adjustments that she has made. It truly shares with the reader her spiritual response to the world around her. Here is one of my favorite parts, of which there are many:

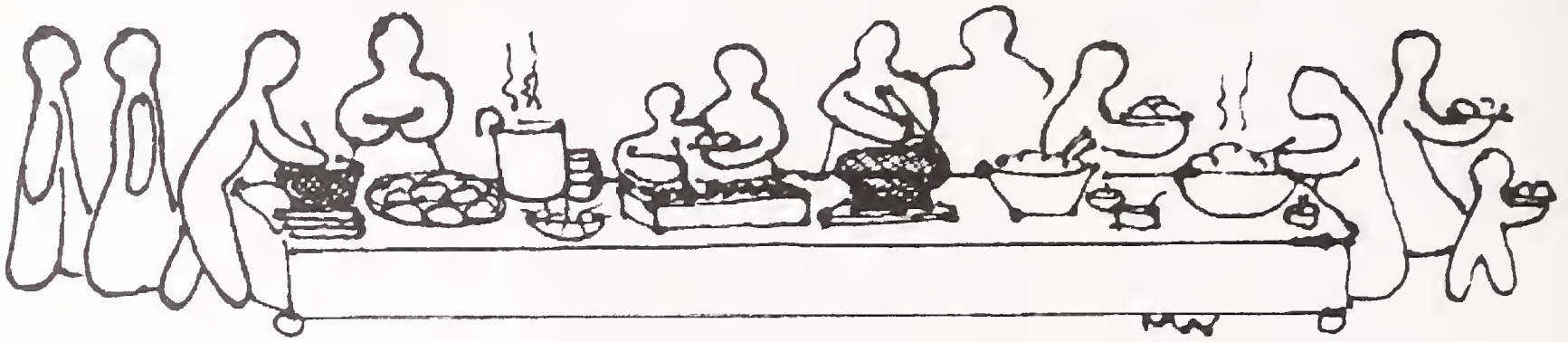
Even as the spider unquestionably follows her innate pattern as builder

I would be sensitive to my role in developing the wondrous web of spirit.

Just as she expresses awareness of the wondrous web of spirit, so is she aware of the wondrous web of life. ■

If you would like to review books, or have a book that you’d like to review for Friends, please contact the editor. Unsolicited as well as solicited reviews will be given consideration.—Editor.

Quaker Potluck



by Mary Beth Webster
Grass Valley Meeting

The rich man brings a bag of chips,
offers them like flakes of gold...
Comes late—the time for chips is
past—
Eats hearty, takes the full bag home.

A fixed-income divorcee spent \$8 on
ingredients,
three hours' labor on her proffered

soup.
Can hardly eat for talking, laughing,
listening.

A humble elder couple bring Jersey
cream, wild berries, homemade cheese
and bread, a platter of sliced tomatoes.
Offerings beyond price.
Eat modestly.

One could dwell on the fairness
or its lack,

Examine pride and hubris,
Idealize simplicity, humility,
Compare.

And one could make a proverb from
odd bits:

"Each according to ability,
Each burdened by unfathomable
needs,
has brought their best."

Death and Resurrection

We all experience small personal deaths in our lives from time to time—moving away from friends, giving up a long-held dream or divorce, for example. Following these little deaths often come openings to new and unexpected experiences—in other words, resurrection.

In addition to personal deaths and rebirths, there can be times of collective dying and resurrection that we all go through together. Staring us in the face in Mendocino Friends Meeting is the death of our small group as we've come to know it. Several longtime members have moved away or soon will, either temporarily or permanently. It's a scary time for me as the resurrection part of the equation is not guaranteed. I find myself wondering how much we need to act as midwives for our Meeting's rebirth and how much we should trust that a resurrection and repopulation will occur. Need we go out into the wider community and beat the bushes for potential members? Should we stand on street corners and beat the drum for Quakerism?

Anthony Manousos writes in the March 1998 issue of *Friends Journal*, "If the practice of Quakerism has brought us any joy or peace of mind, if it has helped us or the community in any way, we would be remiss not to share this good news with others." He continues that if we ran across a new medicine that would cure physical ills we'd certainly share the news, so why not share our remedy for spiritual ills? Why not, indeed?

Although a resurgence of our membership might be expected as part of the natural ebb and flow of life (or rebirth after death), I know of no prohibition against giving God a helping hand in the matter. And at the same time we might be introducing our friends or acquaintances to the spiritual nourishment we've come to expect from our Meeting. Perhaps beating the bushes or drumming on street corners would be a bit much, but let's think about sharing our good fortune with others in a quieter way.—Connie Fledderjohann, Mendocino Meeting (PYM)

Prescription

*If you're tired from work and your spirits are low,
And if things haven't gone well this week—
If you need some encouragement, you'd better go
To Meeting at Strawberry Creek.*

*If you're wanting a cure for your lonely soul's plight,
And some good friends, your hunger to feed,
And you're seeking some guidance for finding the Light
Strawberries are just what you need!*

*Yes, if you've a desire to find Love at all,
And connect with your guide and your Maker,
Then set time aside and just answer the call,
And come be a Strawberry Quaker.*

—R.W. Emmons, *Strawberry Creek Meeting (PYM)*

Being Unconditionally Loved

There is a Spirit in, and of, the Universe. It is reliable. I know it when I get a special smile from a friend. Sometimes I know it when I find an avalanche lily, in the high country, poking through melting spring snow, or when I watch the aerobatics of courting damsel flies. I met it while watching a hornet over a period of an hour and a half as she freed herself, with great skill and patience, from a blob of honey in which she was drowning.

I met this Spirit when Tahseana delighted me with her (then) four-year-old logic. I also meet this Spirit when someone pulls the central meaning out of a tight and searching conversation, by getting off a wonderful wise crack that sets us all laughing.

Those are the times in which my head clears up. Then I see, I understand, I grasp that there is no separation; we all relate to each other; we are all—Aedes mosquitoes, boarding house keepers and Adete penguins—products of the same Universe: children of the same God.

This Spirit, this God, is the object of my worship and adoration, and the source of all my longing. She/ he gives me my companions: human, bird, insect, snail and tree. That I am not worthy of such richness makes not the slightest difference to me; I accept it all as if I were king. I am a con man of the first order, taking life's goods without lifting a finger to work for them. And as the honest and open crook that I am, I am aware that I am adored. Imagine!—Robert Murphy, *Sheridan (Wyoming) Meeting*.

The First Day Symphony

Friends, I rise this morning with my simple, musical triangle, playing a simple tone, to thank you all for allowing me to be a part of a loving symphony dedicated to God. My simple tone represents my single effort within a larger action taken by this community to introduce the loving presence of God to an individual, group or nation.

People take great joy in our symphony of actions. They feel the presence of God in our kindness, our caring, and our faith. This inspires them to continue to play their instruments, and together, we bring about a joyful noise unto the Lord for all to hear. For some, our actions remind them that God does love and care about them. For some, we are their only evidence that God exist.

Music takes us on a journey. Each note represents a step on the path. If we overlook a note or two to get to the grand finale, the melody will break down.

Jesus modeled this strategy throughout his life. Jesus did his part and then left the task to those who believed in his view of the kingdom of God to continue the work.

Our faith allows us to let go of end results and focus on including God within the process. Our failure does not come from a war breaking out or an increase in homelessness. Our failure comes when the people involved did not sense the presence of God emanating from us. The kingdom is present in the moments of our God-centered actions.

Each First Day Morn we come to play and share our experiences of being the presence of God within the world. A quick glance around the room and we see the many faces and expressions of God; as we quiet ourselves we begin to hear the sounds of God's presence—we are tuning up our instruments; within the quiet a single instrument starts to play upon our hearts as a friend begins to share; and, as we close, we embrace each other confident in our ability to share God's presence with others through our actions.—Greg Roers, *Eugene Friends Meeting*

Call to Pacific Yearly Meeting July 27--August 1, 1998 Watsonville, California

"We did conclude among ourselves to settle a meeting, to see one another's faces, and open our hearts one to another in the Truth of God once a year, as formerly it used to be."—*Yearly Meeting, London, 1668*

Having met for more than a dozen summers at Craig Hall, Chico, this year Pacific Yearly Meeting gathers in a new location. Mount Madonna Center, on a ridge overlooking the Pajaro Valley and Monterey Bay, was for decades a cattle ranch and is now home to an alternative grade school, a conference center for spiritual growth workshops, and a yogic ashram.

So, a big change and all the little challenges of any unfamiliar setting. Its physical beauty we will find congenial and inspiring. Into its spiritual beauty we may travel as visitors welcomed into another culture, walking quietly and with gentle curiosity, not fretful, not anxious to judge. We may come to love it, as we come to see it as another of that infinite number of ordinary places where God can work the extraordinary, can center a beloved community.

—Eric Moon, Clerk of Pacific Yearly Meeting

Vital Statistics

NEW MEMBERS/TRANSFERS

- Elaine Haney, transfer from Flagstaff to Pima Mtg.
- Dodd Bogart, Albuquerque Mtg.
- Kirby Lewis, Albuquerque Mtg.
- June Clark, Tempe Mtg.
- David Richardson, San Francisco Mtg.
- Marlene Philley, Marin Mtg.

BIRTHS

- Wilfred Sage Virkus Graham, b. May 13, to Margaret and David Graham, Ft. Collins Mtg.

Calendar

- **July 5—July 12, Hotevilla, Arizona:** The Hotevilla-Bacavi Community School on the Third Mesa will host the AFSC/Intermountain Yearly Meeting Joint Service Project again. Maintenance is always needed around this locally-controlled school. This may be the year we landscape around the library.
- **July 16-18, NPYM Annual Session,** Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA.
- **July 27-August 1, PYM Annual Session,** Mt. Madonna Center, Watsonville, CA.
- **July 26—Aug 7, Oglala, South Dakota:** The Mato Mna Sni Ta Tiospaye has invited the AFSC/IMYM Joint Service Project to do a longer and bigger project there this year, possibly larger ceremonial structure for the community.
For more information about projects listed above, contact Mike Gray, 9910-B Poudre Canyon Highway, Bellvue, CO 80512. (970) 490-2585. mgray@lamar.colostate.edu.
- **August 9—15, Maclovio Rojas, a colonia (settlement) near Tijuana** where around 1,200 families live without running water, electricity, or paved roads. The AFSC/SCQM Youth Service Project is returning to this site to help in whatever projects need our assistance.
For more information, contact Anthony Manousos, 5238 Andalucia Court, Whittier, CA 90601. (562) 699-5670. friendsbul@aol.com



THERE IS STILL TIME....

- * \$5 for a trial subscription for *Friends Bulletin* until the end of 1998.
- * \$10: suggested donation for your meeting to be included in *The Directory of Western Friends*. Deadline: Sept. 1.
- * \$20: suggested donation to set up a homepage for your meeting or worship group on the *Friends Bulletin* web site.
- * \$24: Renew your subscription for 1998. (It's never too late!)

Send your check to *Friends Bulletin*, 5238 Andalucia Court, Whittier, CA 90601.

Consider a NEW Costa Rica Study Tour. March 4-15, 1999. E-mail: js-tuckey@sol.nacsa.co.cr or fax (506) 645-5528 or write Sarah Stuckey de Araya, apdo. 46-56-55, Monteverde, Costa Rica, Central America.

Japan? Russia? Southwest U.S.? Global Friends School is planning Autumn-Winter programs for mature teens & young adults exploring peace, education & earth beauty! Contact corinne joy: 530.477.1277.

READ "THE BEST OF FRIENDS, VOL.1," showcasing 40 exciting Quaker writers and artists from across America—including many western Friends—and beyond. Captivating short stories, compelling essays, striking poetry, excerpts from new novels, vivid drawings. 260 pages, paperback, \$10.95 plus \$2.75 shipping. For phone or credit card orders: 1-800-742-3150; or by mail from: Kimo Press, PO Box 82, Bellefonte, PA 16823

Share Your Light With Friends Everywhere!

The Directory of Western Friends Meetings will contain information about all Meetings, worship groups, and Friends organizations in the West. Please send information by September 1 so that our Directory will be as accurate and up-to-date as possible. The Directory will appear in the October issue and will also be on-line. A \$10 donation is requested. Contact the editor for more information if necessary.

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